

Top 10 Things To Consider When Purchasing an Assessment System

- 1. Easy To Use.** Teachers do not need to spend valuable teaching time laboring over complex technology tools. If an assessment system is cumbersome, teachers will likely not use it, and districts will risk losing their investment.
- 2. Short Implementation Time.** The system should be easy to implement. Schools and districts should be able to begin using the system out of the box. Easily importing district test items and curricular goals and objectives should allow teachers to use the system immediately and realize the benefits of their investment.
- 3. Doesn't Require Modification to your Assessment Program.** The system should be flexible enough to allow you to use your assessment items and your specific district curriculum. The system should not require you to make modifications to the way you wish to administer your classroom tests and district benchmarks. Regardless of the type or purpose of your assessments, the program should meet your needs today and adapt to your changing needs in the future.
- 4. Provides Immediate Results to the Classroom Teacher.** A good assessment system should allow teachers to easily build tests, score and analyze the results, and get immediate feedback. Not only is this information invaluable in tracking and monitoring student progress and modifying instruction, but also results from classroom testing can be used for final grades or determining exit competency for the course or content area. Having this flexibility requires that tests be scored locally and that scores be aggregated at the building or district level.
- 5. Accurate.** The system should utilize proven, accurate technology, which will help ensure accurate scoring of assessments. Teachers, schools, and districts will then be assured that the classroom results are valid and therefore a good predictor of performance on other assessments.
- 6. Permits the Use of Publisher, District, and Teacher-Developed Content Correlated to State and District Curriculum Frameworks.** The assessment system should allow users to take advantage of the electronic item banks provided with popular textbook publisher's teachers' editions. Items from a myriad of sources including public domain items, district-developed items, and teacher-developed items can be either entered or imported into the item-banking system. The item-banking component should allow correlation to textbook and/or state or local objectives.
- 7. Flexible, Scalable and Open.** Getting data in and out of the assessment system should be easy and quick. It should allow student demographic information and class rosters to be manually keyed, imported, or scanned into the program. Additionally, the program should allow raw test data, test score information, and student demographic information to be exported for external analysis and grade book programs. Report formats should include both PDF and HTML. The system should also be scalable to allow it to be used from the smallest to the largest schools within a district—both elementary and secondary.
- 8. Saves Teacher Time.** It is all about giving teachers time to teach. A good assessment system should allow teachers to quickly and easily build a test from items saved within the item banks, score the test and report the results, and then export the scores directly into their teacher grade book or other statistical package. Immediate results will allow the teacher the opportunity for an immediate instructional response in the classroom or with individual students.
- 9. Affordable.** The assessment system should be reasonably priced allowing districts and schools with limited budgets to purchase and implement the solution.
- 10. Proven Customer Support.** The assessment system vendor should have experience providing assessment solutions in the education market. Support concerns should be quickly resolved with easy-to-use online help or through a readily available telephone support staff.

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